climate change on women living in poverty. However, the proposed National Mission for Socio-Economic Empowerment of Women envisages setting targets and monitoring the progress in respect of women centric and women related programmes, implemented by various ministries. Under the National mission, all schemes that provide safe drinking water to habitations, opportunities to provide equal access to community resources, etc., will be monitored with a view to enhance the coping capacity of women to withstand the adverse impact of climate change with particular reference to water, fodder, fuel, Wood and livelihood.

Lake conversation

†2446. SHRI SHREE GOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any plan has been formulated to conserve over 100 lakes in the country;

(b) the potential use of water stored in those lakes;

(c) whether it would be useful to undertake such a plan with regard to the ponds in cities in the country;

(d) if so, whether any plan has been formulated in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) A Centrally Sponsored Scheme of National Lake Conservation Plan (NLCP) has been formulated by this Ministry for conservation and management of polluted and degraded lakes in urban and semi-urban areas of the county. NLCP is under implementation since June, 2001. Lakes covered under the Scheme are used for various purposes including drinking, irrigation, recreational etc.

(c) to (e) For conservation of ponds, two schemes of 'Repair, Renovation and Restoration (RRR) of water bodies, with domestic support and external assistance, are under implementation by Ministry of Water Resources, primarily for improvement of catchment areas of tank commands, increase in storage capacity, ground water recharge, improvement in agriculture and increased availability of drinking water.

Under the scheme covered by external assistance, States may take up projects for funding with 75% loan from the World Bank to be repaid by the States. The balance 25% is contributed by Government of India as Additional Central Assistance to the States for the projects. Under the domestic support scheme, funding is in the ratio of 25:75 (Centre: State) for non-special category States and in the ratio of 90:10 for special category States and drought prone/naxal affected/tribal areas.

Environment Impact Assessment System

2447. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to overhaul the process of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) system;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details of representations received by Government against the EIA process during the last one year and the action taken thereon;

(c) whether Government proposes to upgrade the quality of EIA process and also to create National Environment Protection Authority for early clearance of various projects; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) Ministry of Environment & Forests has proposed amendments in the Environment Impact Assessment Notification, 2006, *vide* S.O. 195(E) dated 19th January, 2009 for obtaining comments / suggestions from all concerned. The proposed amendments, some of which are clarificatory in nature and some seek to make the notification more comprehensive, *inter-alia* include: (i) enhancement of threshold limit for construction projects from 20,000 sq.m. to 50,000 sq.m, (ii) modernization and expansion projects without increase in pollution load to be exempt from the provision of EIA Notification, 2006, (iii) prospecting of minerals to be exempt from EIA Notification, 2006, (iv) biomass based power plants upto 50 MW to be exempt from EIA, (v) category 'B' projects to be exempt from scopping for three years, and (vi) proactive / voluntary disclosure of information relating to grant of environmental clearance for ensuring effective implementation and enforcement of environmental regulation through the creations of societal vigil. The comments / suggestions on the proposed draft amendments have since been received from all concerned including (i) Ministries / Departments of Central Government, (ii) State Governments, (iii) Civil Society and (iv) Industry Associations. The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 provides a time limit of 365 days for finalization of the draft Notification from the date of its issue after taking into consideration the comments received.

(c) and (d) A proposal to set up a National Environment Protection Authority to strengthen enforcement and monitoring of compliance of environmental statutes and to improve environmental planning and management is in a conceptual stage.

Environment Protection Laws

2448. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRI DARA SINGH:
Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has been weak to enforce strictly the 20 Environment Protection Laws, as has been done in the United States;

(b) whether Government proposes to set up a Regulatory Authority on the lines of US's Empowerment Protection Agency; and

(c) if so, by when such a draft legislation is proposed to be brought forward by Government in Parliament as the present Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has proved to be toothless to punish polluters in the country?